

The economy in Northern Ohio will benefit from several important provisions in the Agriculture Appropriations Act that passed the House of Representatives today. "Agriculture is Ohio's biggest business, and this legislation will help grow our economy forward and propel job creation by building higher technology, sustainable agricultural opportunities across our region," said Kaptur, a member of the agriculture appropriations subcommittee.

The bill funds the U.S. Department of Agriculture, America's primary department for the production of food, fiber, forestry and fuel, for the fiscal year 2010.

Kaptur noted that the bill significantly increases attention to production of agriculturally-based biofuels, food safety, nutrition for the elderly, children, the unemployed and the needy, investment in rural areas and agricultural enterprises in urban counties, and conserves national resources.

Due to rising unemployment, she said, the bill includes \$5 million to implement Hunger-Free Community grants for promotion, outreach and demonstration projects, and technical assistance to community gardens, community-supported agriculture and linkages between farmers and local markets.

The bill expands the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition program, for which Kaptur wrote the initial legislative language as a member of the appropriations committee. The popular program has provided more than \$10 million in fresh fruits and vegetables to eligible senior citizens and created an important new market for local farmers since it was implemented in 2001.

It also provides expanded funding for the Commodity Supplemental Food Program and permits states to use up to 10 percent of the funds provided for purchasing Temporary Emergency Food Products to help with the costs of storing, transporting and distributing commodities.

The bill also provides continuing support for aquaculture, a potential growth industry in Northern Ohio, and expands eligibility for two rural development programs to urban communities-- food products and energy.